"Appointment in Dallas": Still Another Appraisal

Jeffrey P. Hoyle
37 Farnham St.
Fall River, MA 02720

Last year, one of my students told me of a new book on the assassination of President John Kennedy, and asked my opinion of it. I picked up a copy of Hugh McDonald's "Appointment in Dallas," read it through, and told the student to forget it, for "the final solution" presented a "single bullet theory" even more unbelievable than the Warren Report.

I thought nothing more about the matter until I received the November and December issues of "PURSUIT". In two months, about five pages had been devoted to appraising this book.

Taking a lesson from R.B. Cutler, that one picture is worth a thousand words, let us look at the McDonald "picture" and, if it does not prove to be credible, let us use the scant eight pages of "PURSUIT" for other, more credible works.

Saul's First Shot

McDonald tells us Saul fired from a second-floor window of the County Records Building, located on the corner of Houston and Elm Streets./1/ According to Saul's story, he fired his first shot which struck the President to the right of the middle of his back. The bullet continued on to exit from the President's throat and "drove on to hit Governor Connally"./2/ It is interesting to note that Saul is the first person to see this double hit. Not one of the eyewitnesses in Dealey Plaza claimed to see Kennedy and Connally hit by the same bullet. Even the early official documents referred to two separate shots striking the two men./3/

The Analysis

Using a diagram/4/ which locates Saul in the second floor window #4 of the Records Building, we find that the lateral angle from Saul's "nest" to the approximate location of the limousine on Elm Street is 35° from left to right./5/

The bullet entered JFK 1 1/8 inches to the right of the middle of the back (according to measurements of the President's shirt). Upon exit it nicked the left side of the tie./6/ It entered the Governor on his right side, near the armpit, the point of exit being just below the right nipple on his chest. It is obvious then, that the flightpath through each man is from right to left.

Putting all of this information together, we have a bullet traveling in a left-to-right flightpath of 35° which, upon entering the President, changes its flightpath to a right-to-left trajectory. Upon exit from the throat, a quick right, then a sharp left are needed in order to move in another right-to-left path through Connally (see figure 1 below).

When compared to the Commission's "magic bullet" flightpath, I find Saul's even more remarkable. Add to this the discrepancies pointed out by P. Hymans and R. Sprague, and nothing more need be said.

Notes

/1/ Hugh McDonald, "Appointment in Dallas", New York, Zebra Books, 1975, p. 179.
/2/ Ibid, p. 176.
/3/ See CD-5 FBI Report 11/29/63, Agents Barrett and Lee.
CD-87, US Secret Service Preliminary Special Dallas Report no. 1.
/4/ Robert Cutler, Drawing Number 83, Cutler Designs, Box 1465, Manchester, MA 01944.
/5/ Using Mr. Cutler's drawing of Saul's location, I drew a travel line through the center of the limousine and up Elm St. I measured the intersection of the flightpath with the travel line with a protractor. Any error in the measurement is the author's, not Mr. Cutler's.
/6/ Earl Warren et al., "Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy," U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964, p. 92.

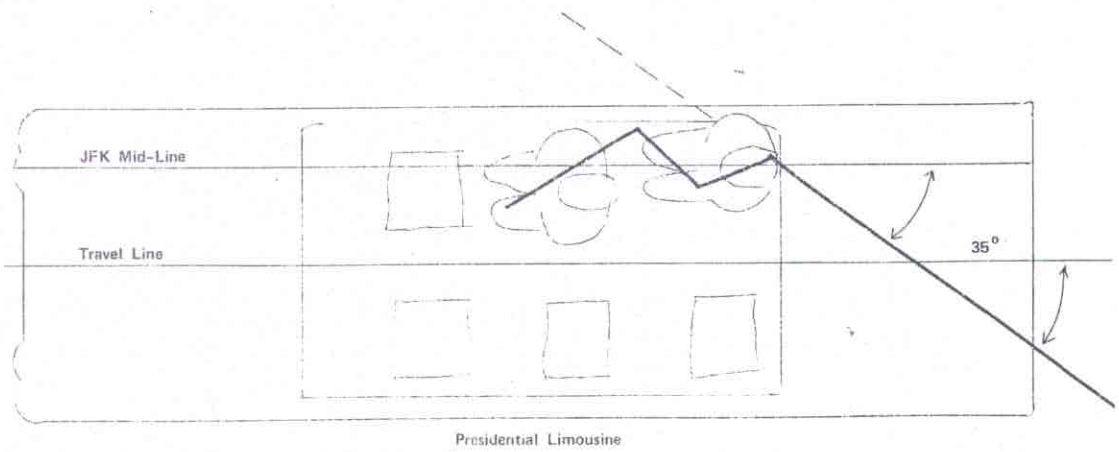

Figure 1: This diagram shows the meandering flightpath of Saul's shot from the Records Building, at the corner of Elm and Houston Streets